

Cheryle Cuddy Gardner
“Cherry”
Principal Specialist of Fine Arts
Virginia Department of Education

Cherry Gardner is Principal Specialist of Fine Arts at the Virginia Department of Education (DOE). She serves pre-kindergarten through higher education in the areas of dance arts, music, theatre arts, and visual arts. Cherry has served the commonwealth for over 20 years—beginning her tenure as Supervisor of Art in July 1986. She was appointed Associate Director of Fine Arts in 1987, and accepted her present role with DOE in February 1991. Prior to her appointment to these positions, Cherry served as elementary art specialist for Prince William County (1979-86) and art instructor for New River Valley Community College (1975-76).

Cherry holds a B.S. in Art Education K-12 and Elementary Education grades K-7 from Radford University (1972), earned a M.S. in Art Education/Supervision and K-12 Administration from Radford University (1974), and post-graduate doctoral studies in administration at the University of Virginia. A frequent presenter at national and state meetings, she has been very active professionally. She served two terms as president (1980-82 & 1984-86) and vice-president (1982-84), Northern Virginia Region, Virginia Art Education Association (VAEA); VAEA conference exhibitors chairperson, VAEA Conferences (1984 & 1986); co-chairperson (1985), Metro-Washington Area Conference (VA, MD, & D.C.); secretary/treasurer (1997-1999) and vice-president (1999-2001), National Association of State Directors of Art Education; president (1999-2001), National Council of State Arts Education Consultants; National Arts Education Partnership Steering Committee (1999-2002); and chair-elect (1994-1996), chair (1996-1998), and past chair (1998-1999), Dance Education Division, Virginia Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. She was awarded Northern Virginia Elementary Art Educator in 1982 and Art Teacher of the Year in 1983. In 2000-01, she served as the NAEA Southeastern Region Representative. In 2006, she was awarded the Virginia Art Education Association's most prestigious honor—Virginia Art Educator of the Year.

She serves as DOE liaison to the Virginia Fine Arts Leadership Coalition for Education, the VAEA Board (28 years), the Virginia Music Educators Association, Inc. Board, the Virginia Theatre Association Board, and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Teacher Advisory Board. She was appointed to the Governor's Commission for Educational Museums (1994-1998) and the May the Month for Children Task Force in 2000-present. She holds membership in the National Council of State Arts Education Consultants, National Association of State Directors of Art Education, National Art Education Association, Music Educators National Conference, National Parents and Teachers Association, Southeastern Theatre Conference, Virginia Art Education Association, Virginia Theatre Association, Virginia Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, Virginia Music Educators Association, Inc., Delta Kappa Gamma Society, and Jamestown 400th Anniversary Committee. Cherry presently provides leadership and direction in the design, development, delivery, assessment and services related to curriculum and instruction of fine arts educational programs within pre-K-12 Virginia schools and higher education pre-service fine arts programs of study.

Cherry is married to Dr. James R. Gardner of Midlothian, Virginia and has two daughters, Cheryle Deneé Gardner-art specialist, Loudoun County Public Schools; and

Ashley Kaye Fetterman, self-employed, special effects make-up, film industry, Los Angeles, California.